

Mission Training Complex Sites Enabling Home Station Education

By MAJ Indira R. Donegan

One of the most valuable training resources you may not have heard of is the Mission Training Complex, otherwise known as an MTC.

The Army has 32 MTC's across the globe to support Home Station Training.

When I attended the Intermediate Level Education at Fort Leavenworth, my class was often provided opportunities to meet with senior military leaders. While the discussions always had something for your kitbag, I was shocked at the running theme in each of these events.

Senior officers with 10-15+ years of seniority were of the opinion that junior officers who only knew an Army at war, didn't know how to "train." Really?

With my BN S3 and XO days long behind me, certainly there are things I wish our team could have done better. We developed training plans, and strove to constantly improve them. The plans worked, and we were a success.

In retrospect, I have to surmise that we probably could have achieved more.

The question arises, 'did the shortfall exist because we didn't know how to train?'

The answer is no. Ultimately, we were not fully aware of what

was at our disposal.

Home Station Training is one of several coined terms found in TRADOC PAM 525-5-8, The U.S. Army Training Concept 2012-2020 that essentially explains why a Soldier's necessary

training needs to be available at the point of need. MTC's provide commanders and staff members the capability to sustain individual digital skills and unit mission command collective training in order to



Photo by Robert Duke

Joint Base San Antonio police use the Mission Training Complex Dismounted Soldier Training System capability for a high impact training evolution.

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maintain war fighting functional competencies. By offering a toolkit of virtual, constructive, and gaming training enablers set in a replicated operational environment, the MTC provides the capability of integrating these enablers with the live training environment. When all four training environments--live, virtual, constructive and gaming--come together, units get to experience the seamless integrated training environment which enables commanders to produce trained and ready forces at home station.

The MTC's augment the unit's training by offering a wide variety of training enablers that radically enhance training. MTC facilities, whether new construction or legacy, include classrooms, reconfigurable tactical operations centers furnished with mission command systems that replicate battalion to echelon above corps, and the physical space required to conduct constructive simulation exercises that stimulate MC systems.

The facilities are fully networked to distribute training and to allow training at different classification levels simultaneously.

Some MTC facilities have co-located TOC pads where units can set up their own vehicles and equipment to conduct TOC integration training and CPXs using a direct exercise feed from the MTC.

Currently the National Simulation Center is partnering with the 7th Signal Command to network the MTCs and centers of excellence which will



Photo by Robert Duke

A reconfigured room inside the Joint Base San Antonio Mission Training Complex provides individualized activities for each student.

seriously amp up distributed exercises between schools and installations.

Is your Captain's Career Course doing multi-branch StaffEx? Would you like to execute a collective training exercise where the Signal CCC and the Fires CCC write the annexes for the Maneuver CCC capstone event and track their AOR's from afar? With a few extra TACLANes, the MTCs can make anything happen, and this is the direction we are moving in.

So what can you expect from your local MTC? The MTC staff will analyze your training objectives and overall MC training needs. The staff will provide scheduling and planning support, to include scenario development and

integration of multiple events/multiple echelons. Based on your training objectives and intent, they will recommend the right mix of simulation, stimulation, gaming and virtual training enablers as well as a suggested map of progressive and iterative training. I would submit that if you walked into your MTC with nothing but a confused look on your face and a list of MOS's within your unit, the staff could help you come up with something impressive. The best part about all this capability is that it is completely free and waiting for you.

Still not convinced the MTC has a flavor to suit every taste? Consider this. All Army Battle

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Photo by Robert Duke

A Tactical Operations Center is set up outside a Mission Training Center to provide a holistic environment mimicing actual field conditions.

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Command Systems are available for training at the MTC--FBCB2, AFATDS, BCS3, DCGS-A and CPOF, to name a few. Non-ABCS systems are also available, such as: Axis Pro, CIDNE, DAGR, Movement Tracking System, and Tactical Ground Reporting System. Their list of training aids, devices, simulators, and simulations for collective training include: Virtual Battle Space 2, VBS2 Fires and VBS2 Land Navigation, Dismounted Soldier Training System, Moral

Combat, Tactical Language Trainer, HUMINT Control Cell virtual trainer, Close Combat Tactical Trainer, and several aviation and vehicle trainers.

The bottom line is that the MTC is ready to serve every skill set in the Army inventory in some fashion, from Signal, to Military Intelligence, to every possible combat arms branch.

Whether your training strategy consists of stand-alone training for individual or platoon sized elements, Military Decision Making Process training as an professional development training opportunity, or scenario-

driven multi-echelon MC training, the MTC is your combat multiplier. Schedule a tour and see how leveraging some very cool toys on the installation's dime can significantly boost your training events.

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ACRONYM QuickScan

ABCS - Army Battle Command Systems
 CAC-T - Combined Arms Center for Training
 CCC - Captain's Career Course
 CoE - Center of Excellence
 CPX - Command Post Exercise
 HUMINT - Human Intelligence
 LVCG-IA - Live, Virtual, Constructive, Gaming-

Integrating Architecture
 MC - Mission Command
 MTC - Mission Training Complex
 RTOC - Reconfigurable Tactical Operations Center
 STAFFEX - Staff Exercise
 TOC - Tactical Operations Center